

REMARKS

Upon entry of the instant Amendment, claims 15-17 and 30 will be pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 1, 3-14 and 26-29 will have been canceled. Support for the amendment to claim 30 is provided in at least claim 30 and original claim 14. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the rejected claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Present Amendment is proper for entry

Applicant respectfully submits that the instant amendment is proper for entry after final rejection. Applicant notes that no question of new matter is presented nor are any new issues raised in entering the instant amendment of the claims and that no new search would be required. Moreover, Applicant submits that the instant amendment places the application in condition for allowance, or at least in better form for appeal. Accordingly, Applicant requests the Examiner to enter the instant amendment, consider the merits of the same, and indicate the allowability of the present application and each of the pending claims.

Applicant notes, in particular, that allowable claim 30 has been amended to independent form by incorporating the subject matter of claim 14 into the claim 30. Claims 15-17 have been amended to depend from claim 30. Applicant has not added more claims than were previously pending.

Allowable Subject Matter and Examiner Interview

Applicant appreciates courtesy extended by the Examiner during a brief telephonic conversation with Applicant's undersigned representative. In accordance with the conversation, Applicant has amended allowable claim 30 to include the subject matter of claim 14. This should place claim 30 into immediate condition for allowance. As to the claims 15-17, these claims were previously dependent on claim 14, but are now amended to depend from claim 30. As noted, claim 30 includes all of the features of claim 14 and , as such, dependent claims are also in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, as Applicant has presented claim 30 in independent form, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner indicate that at least claims 30 and 15-17 are allowed. Since all of the features of claim 14 are now in claim 30, there are no new issues raised by either the amendment to claim 30 or the change of dependency of claims 15-17. In fact, the dependency would be exactly the same as if claim 30 features were included in claim 14, with claims 15-17 remaining the same.

The remaining rejections are now moot since Applicant has canceled the remaining claims in order to place the entire application in condition for allowance.

Comments on Reasons for Allowance

In response to the Statement of Reasons for Allowance set forth in the Office Action, Applicants wish to clarify the record with respect to the basis for the patentability of the indicated claims in the present application. In this regard, while Applicant does not disagree with the Examiner's indication that certain identified features are not

disclosed by the references, Applicant submits that the claims in the present application recite a combination of features, and that the basis for patentability of these claims is based on the totality of the recited features.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all of the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed.

Respectfully submitted,
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